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Student Group Checking Its Backers

By HEDRICK SMITH
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18 — The National Student Association is checking its financial supporters to determine which ones have served as secret channels for Central Intelligence Agency funds and which were legitimate donors, association officials said today.

The group's 10-member supervisory board announced yesterday the association's "complete and permanent break" with the intelligence agency and met again today to decide how to carry out that decision.

"We are desperately trying to disentangle ourselves," said Sam Brown, a 23-year-old Harvard divinity student who heads the supervisory panel. He said he understood the C.I.A. was trying to do the same.

Finds Air Cleared

The supervisory board members acknowledge they were "confused and exhausted" by consideration of a host of decisions confronting them now that they have disavowed and decided to end the association's 15-year ties with the agency and its financial front mechanisms.

"The air has been cleared. The break has been made," said Philip Werdell, editor of the student magazine The Moderator. "If there are other connections, they will be found out and broken in time."

Mr. Werdell said it was possible that the organization would suspend temporarily all its international activities because of assertions that some of its overseas representatives were involved iwth the agency." Yesterday the supervisory board temporarily suspended the credentials of all such representatives.

But it has yet to resolve such questions as whether the four full-time overseas representatives will be called home, whether their funds and those of scores of part-time representatives are to be cut off, and whether overseas field offices are to be closed. The four full-time representatives were based in France, England, Poland and Uganda. The representative in Warsaw has already left Poland.

No Discussing Individuals

Student officials said they were being extremely careful not to discuss individuals at the moment until they were sure of alleged connections with the C.I.A. such as fellowships financed by the agency.

As they worked to end its connections with the agency student officials worried about protecting the association's own files because of incriminating material they contained. Mr Brown said the policy board had taken steps to "protect our files" and had assigned "someone we trust" to be in the office building at all times.

"The board is worried its own building may be wired," he added. "after this week we believe that anything is "possible."

Association officials disclosed that the supervisory board had been shifting its private meetings from room to room for fear that some of its deliberations might be bugged. Several of its members, some of them undergraduates, left tonight to return to classes.

Problems of Sorting

One of the association's main problems is to sort out which of its financial sources are connected with the intelligence agency, student officials said.

Yesterday the organization named six foundations as C.I.A. financial fronts for the agency and said that "least 15 other foundations and individuals" had passed C.I.A. funds to the student association. These others were not named.

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